

Boom Clap – Robe Cyclones for Charli XCX!

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UK singer songwriter Charli XCX has publically stated that she experiences sound-to-colour synaesthesia and ‘sees’ music in colours ... so it was not a complete surprise to show designer Rob Sinclair and lighting designer Greg Hill when she requested coloured smoke for her current tour. Prominent smoke is also in tune with the ‘horror prom’ theme of the current live show.

Rob immediately knew the solution – Robe Cyclones – having used them very successfully on the Kaiser Chiefs’ tour last year.

Greg, who is out on the road LD’ing the tour, has been working with the innovative and interesting Charli XCX since 2014, and Rob came on board in early 2015 as show designer. Some elements of the show look were already in place, including a set of false scenic Orange amps which are up-lit very effectively with LEDs, so Rob then chose lighting fixtures and positions to evolve the aesthetic from this starting point.

The Cyclone is a moving head integrating a ring of 24 high powered RGBW multichip LEDs and a fan, providing a tool to create some fabulous visual atmospheric effects.

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The perimeter ring of LEDs has a zoom of 8 – 63 degrees and a variable speed fan in the centre, which has a snoot to help create a strong central airflow which can be combined with any type of fog and haze. The fan itself can be independently DMX controlled and is a great complement to foggers and hazers needing fine-tuned directional streams of atmosphere.



On Charli XCX, four Cyclones are positioned high on top of the LED cabinets and fed by four fog machines running on quick-dissipating fluid. The outflows are ducted right up behind the Cyclones, resulting in impressive and very clean, distinctive coloured plumes of smoke.

Greg hadn't used Cyclones before, but as soon as he watched a couple of videos of them in action ... he knew they would be "Perfect for the job".

He really likes the unique look that they create especially with the quick fog. "They are bright and have a really crisp and fast shutter effect as well as some good inbuilt macros," he stated, adding that the fans were also "immensely powerful."

The Cyclones are being run from Greg's grandMA2 light lighting console.

Charli XCX is also very involved in the style of her stage presentation. When the coloured smoke and the Cyclone solution was proposed, her production – led by tour manager Andrew Wilkinson – purchased the Cyclones from Robe UK.